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REMARKS

Claims 26-29, 32-38, and 41-52 were pending in the present Application. Claim 48 has been canceled and Claims 26, 27, 32, 33, 35, 36, 41, 42, 44, 45, 49, 50, and 52 have been amended, leaving Claims 26-29, 32-38, 41-47 and 49-52 for further consideration in the present amendment. Support for the claim amendments can be found at least in paragraph [0026].

It is believed that the amendments made herein may be properly entered at this time, i.e., after final rejection, because the amendments do not require a new search or raise new issues and reduce issues for appeal. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments.

Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Rejection under 35 USC §112

The rejection of the claims under 35 USC 112, first and second paragraphs, have been rendered moot in view of the amendment thereto. Applicants have removed the portions of the claims that led to the 112 rejections.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C §103 (a)

Claims 26-29, 32-38, and 41-52 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various combinations that include U.S. Patent No. 3,762,882, U.S. Patent No. 4,305,792 to Kedward, U.S. Patent No. 4,833,041 to McComas, U.S. Patent No. 6,372,012 to Majagi and U.S. Patent No. 3,061,525 to Grazen. Applicants respectfully traverse.

None of the cited references teach or suggest coating diamond particles with an sp₃ stabilizing compound prior to forming the erosion resistant coating. As noted by Applicants in paragraph [0026], stabilizing the diamond particles as claimed prevents graphitizing, helps stabilize the sp₃ bonding of the diamond particle, and facilitates a better bond of the particles within the alloy matrix. Because of this, erosion resistance is increased since the stabilized diamond particles are less likely to be knocked loose by impacting silt, for example.

In view of the foregoing, the rejection is requested to be withdrawn.

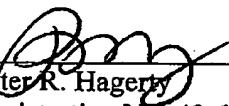
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It is believed that the foregoing amendments and remarks fully comply with the Office Action and that the claims herein should now be allowable to Applicants. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-0868.

Respectfully submitted,

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